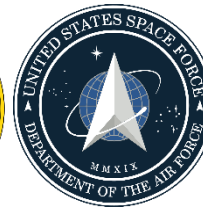
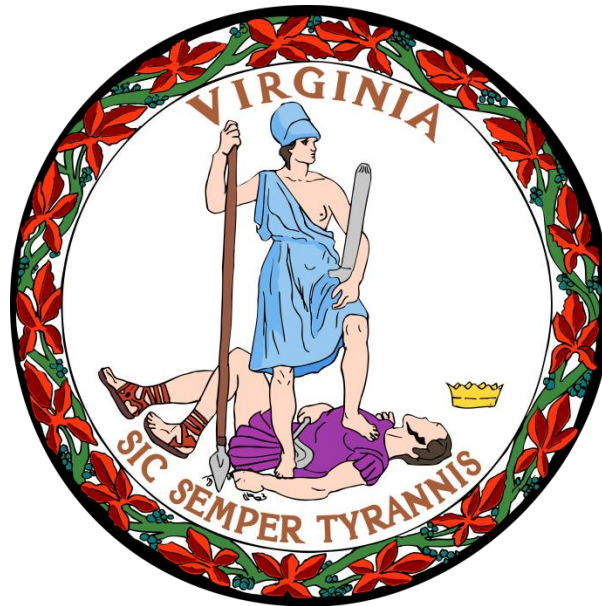


Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs Virginia Military Advisory Council 2024 Annual Report



Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs

2024 VMAC Annual Report

Preface: The Virginia Military Advisory Council was created by the Code of Virginia through §2.2-2666.1. The legislation requires an annual executive summary of interim activity and work of the Council to be submitted to the Governor and General Assembly.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The General Assembly established the Virginia Military Advisory Council (VMAC) as an advisory council to maintain a cooperative and constructive relationship between the Commonwealth and the leadership of the Armed Forces of the United States and the military commanders of such Armed Forces stationed in the Commonwealth, encourage regular communication on continued military facility viability, and encourage the exploration of privatization opportunities and issues affecting preparedness, public safety, and security.

Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs, Craig Crenshaw, served as the VMAC chair. The remainder of the council was composed of 10 members as follows: the Lieutenant Governor, the Attorney General, the Adjutant General, a member from the Senate, member from the House of Delegates, and five Gubernatorial citizen appointments. Over 30 representatives of the major military commands and installations located in the Commonwealth complemented the appointed council.

Under the Secretary's leadership, the VMAC focused on information and discussion in the development of actionable initiatives to advance Virginia's prosperity through investment in competitive military value. The VMAC addressed military installation and defense community issues of compatibility, resilience, and quality of life improvements to ensure best competitiveness for future military investments. Compatibility centered on ensuring that shared space, relationships, and advocacy to meet military needs for modern mission sustainment and growth. Resilience focused mutual energy, climate, and security challenges for shared solutions. Quality of life addressed childcare, spouse employment, education, housing, health care, and safe communities for our military members and defense communities.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

The VMAC met twice in 2024; March and November.

Sentinel Landscapes: The Virginia Sentinel Landscape includes 12 military installations and is called the Virginia Security Corridor. It reaches from Marine Corps Base Quantico to the North Carolina border, East to the Atlantic, and West to Petersburg. The northerly landscape is designated Potomac, the southerly Tidewater. Virginia's inclusion as a Sentinel Landscape partner provides distinct access and scoring advantages in competing for federal funding to address compatibility and resilience initiatives that will improve military value and increase military investment in the Commonwealth. With VMAC advice and support, the partnership hired two federal coordinators who work under the State Forester. The entirety of the March VMAC meeting was dedicated to the Virginia Security Corridor with presentations by the DoD Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration program director, Virginia Assistant State Forester, The Nature Conservancy Virginia State Director, William & Mary Whole of Government Center of Excellence, and the Ward Burton Wildlife Foundation. In 2024 Virginia won federal funding for seven projects under the Sentinel Landscapes program at a value of \$3.84M. A great first year.

2024 VMAC Annual Report

Inter-governmental Service Agreements: The VMAC endorsed acceleration and expansion of inter-governmental service agreements (IGSA). IGSA are agreements between the military and a state or local government that serve the best interests of both parties. As demands increase and available resources decrease for our military installations and supporting defense communities, IGSA are ideal instruments to share cost, resourcing, and administration of services. Through cooperation and economies of scale, IGSA increase efficiency and lower costs for the military and supporting localities. The commitment to leveraging IGSA opportunities continues with great support of the VMAC. During 2023 and 2024 three new IGSA were initiated in Virginia with more on the horizon for 2025.

Quality of Life: The VMAC continued to address and advise quality of life issues associated with military active-duty members and families. Those issues included childcare, spouse employment, education, housing, health care, and safe communities. VMAC collaboration positively influenced legislative agendas in support of childcare, spouse employment, education, and safe communities.

Energy Resilience: The VMAC continued to address issues of energy resilience. VMAC participation was included in Dominion Energy's development of the Energy Integrated Resource plan. Dominion Energy briefed the plan at the November meeting. The VMAC also inspired legislation sponsored by Senator Reeves that promulgates administrative regulations to allow emergency engines located on military installations to operate up to 50 hours per year for nonemergency purposes. An important change that will enable DoD to better sustain aging electrical grids.

Conclusion

The VMAC remains a vital advisory council. In 2024, continued focus on addressing actionable issues that increase Virginia's military value and make Virginia the best place for military members to live, work, and raise a family contributed directly to increased federal funding awards, more resilient and adaptable defense communities, and improved quality of life for our military and defense community members. Each of those elements increase Virginia's military value and improve our competitiveness for increased military investment and will continue in 2025.